[Shri Sebastian Paul]

that the earlier allocation of 24 lakh tonnes should be maintained or at least, the last year's lifted quantity of 20.75 lakh tonnes should be allotted to the State at Central Issue Price. This is most urgently needed because of the advent of our annual festival season, that is, *Onam* which is falling next month.

I hope that the House and the hon. Minister will understand that the present allocation of 17.76 lakh tonnes is totally inadequate to meet the requirements of the State which is a food deficit State. Taking into account the special circumstances and facts of the situation prevailing in Kerala, I hope that the Minister will restore the earlier allocation and the promise given to the State in the last Chief Ministers' Conference will be kept.

Almost all other points have been covered by the hon. Member in this House. So, I am not repeating all those points. With this request to the hon. Minister, I once again appreciate and record my gratitude to the hon. Deputy-Speaker for inviting me to make a speech at the fag end of the day.

[Translation]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : I have a list of members who are yet to speak. The Hon'ble Minister is also supposed to give a reply to it. I would like to request the Hon'ble Members to take only 5 minutes so that this debate could be concluded.

...(Interruptions)

18.25 hrs.

PRESIDENTIAL AND VICE-PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS (SECOND AMENDMENT) BILL*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Now, Shri Ramakant Khalap will Introduce a Bill further to amend the Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections Act, 1952.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : Sir, I beg to move for leave to introduce a Bill further to amend the Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections Act, 1952

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : The question is:

> "That leave be granted to introduce a bill further to amend the Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections Act, 1952."

The motion was adopted.

SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP : Sir, I introduce the Bill.

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* Published in the Gazette of India Extraordinary, Part II, Section-2, dated 12.8.97

18.27 hrs.

STATEMENT RE : PRESIDENTIAL AND VICE - PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS (AMENDMENT) ORDINANCE—*Laid*

[English]

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LAW AND JUSTICE (SHRI RAMAKANT D. KHALAP) : Sir, I beg to lay on the Table an explanatory statement (Hindi and English versions) showing reasons for immediate legislation by the Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections (Amendment) Ordinance, 1997.

Sir, in the Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections Act, 1952, as originally enacted, no security deposit was prescribed. The nomination paper of the candidate, however was required to be subscribed by the candidate himself as assenting to the nomination and by two electors as proposer and seconder.

In order to discourage frivolous candidates from filing nominations to the offices of the President and Vice-President, the Act was amended in 1974 to provide that, in case of Presidential election, the nomination paper should be subscribed by the candidate as assenting to the nomination and also by at least ten electors as proposers and at least ten electors as seconders. In the case of Vice-Presidential election, the requirement was that the nomination papers should be subscribed by the candidate as assenting to the nomination and also by at least five electors as proposers and at least five electors as seconders. The amendment also provided that the candidate for Presidential and Vice-presidential elections shall have to deposit a sum of Rs. 2,500.

The aforesaid amendments are not sufficient deterrent to discourage non-serious candidates. The Election Commission of India, in February, 1997, suggested that the security deposit for elections to the offices of the President and Vice-President may be enhanced.

The Government considered the suggestion made by the Election Commission and decided to enhance the security deposit to rupees fifteen thousand. It also decided to increase the minimum number of proposers and seconders to fifty each in respect of election to the office of President and twenty each in respect of election to the office of Vice-President.

As Parliament was not in Session and the notification for Presidential election was to be issued on 9th June,

1997, the said amendment, was effected by promulgating the Presidential and Vice-Presidential Elections (Amendment) Ordinance, 1997 (No. 13 of 1997).

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer) : Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, this bill was introduced in Rajya Sabha but it could not be passed there. I want to know whether the bill is likely to be introduced afresh?

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Yes, this bill is being introduced afresh.

18.26 hrs.

DISCUSSION UNDER RULE 193

Need for Streamlining the Public Distribution System—*Contd.*

[English]

MR. DEPUTY-SPEAKER : Now, we resume the discussion regarding Public Distribution System. Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat.

[Translation]

PROF. RASA SINGH RAWAT (Ajmer) : Mr. Deputy Speaker, Sir, I would like to say about the discussion being held under Rule 193 in regard to the need for streamlining and making the Public Distribution System more effective and for this purpose we need a proper monitoring system in the respective Ministries urgently at the Central and State Level so that this system could be made more effective. The Hon'ble Minister should hold a meeting periodically with the officials concerned for the monitoring of this system once or twice a month about the requirements of the States, as well as the supply made to them as per their requirements, the quantity of foodgrains provided to different States and Kerosene or sugar provided to them along with the stock of foodgrains available in the F.C.I. godowns in the concerned States. During the festival season they have to supply additional quantity of foodgrains, otherwise they would have to face a serious problem.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, I belong to the family of farmers and I have been brought up in rural atmosphere. One has to walk about 2-3 kms. to reach gram panchayat or its head office, where Fair Price Shop is located and there on his arrival he is told that sugar and wheat are not available at the shop. He visits there 3-4 times and gets disappointed at last but one day he is told that the sugar stock which had arrived sometimes back was now out of stock. As a result thereof he has to purchase sugar and kerosene in black market. His family has even been deprived of the light of 'Chimni' Lamp Light. I would like to request the Hon'ble Minister through you that to avoid such a situation, uniform distribution system is required for the people living below the poverty line of this country who have to work hard whole day to earn their livelihood. If he has to purchase everything in the black market, then it would be very difficult for him. Therefore, I would like the Government to have an effective monitoring system.

Mr. Deputy-Speaker, Sir, in the past there was a crisis in Rajasthan. Our Food Minister met the Union Minister of Food. ...*(Interruptions)*. . I would like to draw the attention of the Hon'ble Minister as he is busy in discussion with Panigrahi ji, we request him to look into my State's position sympathetically. Our Food Minister of Rajasthan came here and met several Food Ministers of other States alongwith Food Secretary and held discussions about the recently launched new system called T.P.D.S under which 5 kgs. of wheat or other Food items are distributed at half the rates to every person living below the poverty line.

Sir, the card holders became agitated after hearing about this scheme under which each family will get only five kgs of foodgrains, whether it has five, six or ten family members. Therefore, a clarification was sought from the Food Supply Officer of the district. Then the Minister of Food told that their order was to provide ten kgs of foodgrains to each ration card holder. Sir, I would like to know from the Government through you whether it is justified to give only 10 kgs of foodgrains in a month to a family which has a total of 10-15 members which included grandmother, mother, children, son, daughter-in-law, daughter etc. Ever since the Janata Party took over, people developed more taste for wheat in the villages. Otherwise, when I was too young, we used to eat maize, millet etc. and on festivals only we used to have wheat. I remember this since my childhood. But with the inception of Janata rule in 1977 the taste of the people changed with the result that they started consuming more wheat alongwith coarse grains. Now, even when the production of wheat in our country has increased and we have become self dependent on this front, you are supplying just 10 kgs of wheat at half the price through Public Distribution System. And for the rest of the consumption people have to purchase foodgrains from the market where at present the prices of these items are almost same or there is a marginal difference but in future when the market prices will increase after some time then it will be difficult for them to purchase foodgrains from there.